



NOAA

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND
ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE



Contact: Michael Milstein
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MEDIA ADVISORY

NOAA Fisheries scientists to brief press on winter killer whale tracking

NOAA Fisheries researchers will describe initial results and findings from their past three weeks tracking endangered Southern Resident Killer Whales off the Washington and Oregon coast. Good weather and ocean conditions allowed researchers exceptional access to the whales, including a newly documented calf, during their winter foraging period.

WHAT: Teleconference to discuss killer whale research results, including:

- Observations and health of the third calf this year
- Satellite tagging and tracking update
- Prey and fecal samples and biopsy samples collected

WHO: Brad Hanson, wildlife biologist, Northwest Fisheries Science Center
Lynne Barre, branch chief for protected resources, West Coast Region
Dawn Noren, research fisheries biologist, Northwest Fisheries Science Center
Marla Holt, wildlife biologist, Northwest Fisheries Science Center
Jen Zamon, research fisheries biologist, Northwest Fisheries Science Center

WHEN: Thursday, March 5, 2015
9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. (Pacific Standard Time)

Call-In: TBD

Passcode: TBD

BACKGROUND: Endangered Southern Resident killer whales spend much of the year in the inland waters of Puget Sound and the Salish Sea but in winter commonly leave on forays along the outer Northwest Coast. Their extended range and winter conditions often make the whales difficult to monitor during this period. Assisted by satellite tracking, NOAA Fisheries researchers followed the whales for three weeks in February to learn more about their winter behavior, health, feeding and use of coastal habitat. The survey was the most successful so far in allowing consistent observation of the whales and their ecosystem. In late February biologists sighted the third Southern Resident calf born this year. Research findings will help inform recovery actions for this endangered species, including revisions in the critical habitat that NOAA Fisheries designates for the endangered whales.

B-roll of new calf:

<https://vimeo.com/121061557>

Photos, including new calf:

https://www.flickr.com/photos/nmfs_northwest/sets/72157648798520904/

Southern Resident Killer Whales:

http://www.nwfsc.noaa.gov/research/divisions/cb/ecosystem/marinemammal/southern_killer_whale.cfm

SRKW tagging program:

http://www.nwfsc.noaa.gov/research/divisions/cb/ecosystem/marinemammal/satellite_tagging/index.cfm

SRKW 10-year research and conservation report:

http://www.nwfsc.noaa.gov/news/features/killer_whale_report/